862 "This is just a common, everyday matter," and should not be thought of as giving anyone any trouble. When difficulties do arise an older woman of the compound or the family offers her breast as a pacifier. In the odd case where this does not succeed pressures tighten up. The breast is referred to as "dirty" or specifically as "excreta" and in extreme instances bitter grounds of leaves are put on the breast and the lesson is very quickly learned.

861 863 858 516 826 After weaning, pressures are slowly brought to bear to teach the child proper ways of living among its people. Thus, as soon as a child can totter, the adult woman in whose hut he is sleeping starts to enforce the rule that he or she should go outside to perform toilet functions, stoop over with knees bent and buttocks near the ground using only the left hand for any attentions necessary to elimination. Later on as language skills develop the importance of the left hand is more highly emphasized as well as the advisability of being discreet about toilet functions. After the age of two and a half or three, scolding gets more intense and the child is told it is dirty or bad for urinating on the floor. Naturally the severity of the training depends to a large extent as well on the particular situation, the mood and personality of the mother, or other socializing agents present, as well as the age of the child. Thus a grandmother was observed who was not overly excited when her two-year-old grandson urinated on the floor, but she became quite angry when he wet her bed.

861 Patient but continuous teaching by adults in the household is a constant part of everyday activities for the young child. The following excerpt from field notes tells its own story:

> A plate of food is on the floor of the hut gathering flies. The grandmother says to her little grandson, "Kachella, pick up the plate. Now, take it over there. Be careful, there is food on the plate. Now, take that other plate and cover the food over. (Plates are made of grass.) That's right, very good." This simple operation which would have taken the grandmother a few seconds has been carried out after two patient minutes of instruction to the child who could not yet speak more than a few words.

867 868 Childhood also ushers in the establishment of sex roles. Boys are now called "small boys" and girls are "small girls" or "three heads" referring to the three-pronged hair style of prepubescent girls. Boys and girls wear different clothes and begin fairly soon to associate with members of their own sex and to carry out chores that are specifically for boys or for girls. In play groups based on sex they wander freely about the village or neighborhood of the city gathering like flies to honey at the slightest hint of any excitement, and wandering further afield from their own compound as they get older. The girl comes quickly under the authority of the women of the household especially her own mother if she is brought up at home. She learns the intricacies of preparing food, carrying water, and the ever-present task of grinding millet either at a quern or by pounding it on a large wooden mortar. The boys begin to gather firewood, help with the farming, run messages, gather grass for a horse if there is one, tend the goats and sheep of the compound, and learn the family dry-season occupation. Pressure to learn these skills is slow but definite. Punishments are rare, but severe. The child is beaten with a rod or whip until neighbors and friends succeed in persuading the parents to cease or desist. Reasons given for the beating often concern the sudden, or con-

861 868

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

tinual dereliction of some duty although outright malfeasance such as stealing can also bring swift and awesome retribution. For example, a young boy was beaten for continually omitting to gather grass for his father's horse. This is a skill that a boy should acquire by the age of six or eight, possibly nine at the very latest. When punishment occurs its severity is noted by all children within earshot, and thus the beating of one child of the village or ward serves notice on all that punishment is not just a matter of threats but may become a reality if limits are transgressed.

That such household learning soon becomes habitual can be seen any day in a Bornu village by watching children. Even a little girl of three and a half can accomplish tasks involving quite a lot of dexterity. One little girl of this age was passed a straw mat plate and separately given some paper clips. She neatly put the paper clips on the plate and began her own already advanced imitation of the quick, deft, jiggling movements associated with the sifting of ground-nut shells. None of her paper clips was dropped, and she soon passed the plate back saying, "Here are some sifted ground nuts."

Sometimes play takes in both sexes and is more complex than simple imitation like the one above. Thus for several days a large group of young children from the age of five through ten may organize a "wedding." The "bride" and "groom" are chosen as are the various kindred, the best man, the leading woman, etc. Care is taken to practice as many of the details of the adult virgin wedding ceremony as they can manage including even a mock impregnation, in this case with a small doll. Wedding foods in miniature are passed around to the adults who accept the mock food with a show of seriousness although they may comment on or question some detail of the ceremony carried out mistakenly or omitted by the children. Adults expressed satisfaction with this type of play and remarked on its instructive value for the children. Such play is related to an even more complex form called *mai-mai*, which is no longer practiced in Bornu. In playing *mai-mai* the young children in a village put on a pageant. They chose a king, nobles, servants, slaves, wives, gave titles to everyone, and behaved for several days in the guise of these socio-political roles. Mock battles were fought, slaves taken and justice meted out in a mock court. Seniority was established by age and consent. The organization was temporary like the "wedding" and disbanded after a few days. During periods when adults are out of the compound, away at a market, or working in the fields during the growing season, children often play house. The group gets together and appoints "fathers," "wives," and "children." The little children may actually cook for their "husbands" on such occasions and the couples go into a hut in the compound where sexual play is carried on. They are, however, soon called back to the larger group where it has been declared "morning" by another child who has announced the "morning prayers" signifying that night has passed. Boys are aware that such play should stop when they can ejaculate. From then on they are men; sex is a serious affair and unmarried girls are illegitimate objects of sexual intercourse. However such prepubescent sex derived from playing "house" is widespread, or to paraphrase one young informant, "Everyone does such things when they are young."

Boys especially, but girls as well, may also begin some religious instruction during their childhood. Although girls never leave home for this purpose, boys sometimes do after the age of six or seven. In some cases the teacher lives nearby

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

Sitting and listening to a group of these young men discussing matters of interest one is struck by the similarities and the differences in their lives as compared to similar groups in western society. Like young men everywhere they discussed the merits of various occupations, the economic returns, the power and prestige to be gained from one or the other type of job, and so on. Unlike their counterparts in western society, they also spend a great deal of time discussing the qualities of "the big men" in Bornu and the benefits received by loyal followers of these men. They are keenly aware, or try to be, of whose fortunes are rising and falling among the big men and listen with great interest to some new tidbit of information to this effect. Like their counterparts elsewhere teenagers learn to smoke cigarettes, gamble, and drink alcoholic beverages during this period. School boys also learn western table manners and take periodic meals in the places that serve western style food.

One of the most important features of a Kanuri boy's adolescence is his choice of training for an occupation. All young boys learn the fundamentals of farming in the households of their youth since almost all compound heads in Bornu, except some in the city, have farms. In some rural villages boys will learn nothing else but farming and probably remain farmers all their lives. On the other hand the majority of Kanuri boys learn another occupation which they will practice during the dry season or the non-farming season. For most boys the choice is determined ahead of time by the elders of the household, or by the economic specializations in their own vicinity. For example, one boy whose father is a salt retailer and who lives with his father in the ward of the dyers has been apprenticed by his father to one of the dyer households. In general boys are expected to take up the occupation of their fathers unless they or their parents have strong desires and an opportunity to do something else. There is much evidence to show that in making the decision the wishes of the young boys were taken into account. Thus one young man remarked that he would never comply with his father's desire that he become a butcher. Instead he started to work with his father's younger brother in the nearby compound and is learning to be a trader in hides and skins. Today a large range of new occupations is opening up; modernization has served to accelerate this degree of freedom simply because there are many more occupations and a wider range of potential income.

Kanuri occupations other than farming usually involve some apprenticeship, especially for young boys. Such training varies with the kind of job being learned, with the age of the boy, and with the nature of the relationship between the boy and the man teaching him the occupation. If an occupation has a higher status or there is an expectation of high income or prestige associated with it, the person doing an apprenticeship must expect a longer training period in return for having been admitted into an advantageous position. Thus truck drivers who make a comparatively high income demand a fee besides three to five years of service from the person taken on as an apprentice. Butchers occupy a low-status position in the society, but they can also earn fairly good incomes and therefore they, too, claim longer than usual apprenticeship. As the boy becomes older, it is expected that his training period will become shorter, whereas the earlier an apprenticeship is begun, the longer the education. This simply reflects Kanuri recognition of the more rapid learning that comes with age.

The terms of the relationship are dictated by the boy and his immediate

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

The terms of the relationship are dictated by the boy and his immediate family or compound head, on the one hand, and the master instructor on the other. If there is a recognized kinship link between the boy and his future teacher and the compound head, then arrangements are much looser than if this is not the case. In the latter situation there is generally hard bargaining over the terms of the relationship. In general the boy must live in the master's house for a stipulated period helping with all the work of the household, the farming, bringing grass for the horse if there is one, running messages, and helping in the occupational specialization of his master. He is a *tada njima,* or son of the house, and refers to his new household head as *abba njima,* or father of the house. He is supposed to act in the situation in the same way as a son acts towards his father. If the master is already a relative, he refers to the apprentice by the appropriate kin term in the manner laid out for such relationships within the culture, although he has added authority in this particular situation. Arrangements in such cases are often made early in the boy's life and last longer, coming closer in effect to a true adoption. A number of men reported having difficulty ending such relationships when they wish to go out on their own, especially when the master is also related by kinship to the apprentice. On the other hand, all Kanuri accept subordination as the means to valued ends. The following case will give some idea of the details involved in such a relationship.

A young barber apprentice of about nineteen or twenty years of age had previously been apprenticed to a seller of kola nuts. However he decided to give it up because it entailed the constant giving of credit to his customers and he never seemed able to collect all the money owed to him. His full brother in Maiduguri who had been his wholesale supplier advised him to return to their home town and become a barber. The older brother claimed that it was a good occupation and furthermore one of the barbers back in Magumeri needed an apprentice since his own son was as yet too young to help in the work. The young boy returned to Magumeri to ask the barber about it and then completed his own arrangements for the apprenticeship. He moved into the barber's compound for one year and became his apprentice. He could visit the compound in which his mother lived and attend his own farm plots. But he had to cultivate the barber's land, gather grass for the horse, carry water now and then, and be ready at all times to run messages for his *abba njima.* The barber taught him how to shave heads and cup blood (for medicinal purposes), and gave him a barber's bag of tools with which he began working sometimes with his master, sometimes alone.[3] By rights all the proceeds earned during that year were supposed to be given to the master barber. Naturally he pocketed an occasional fee but not too often; to do so would have been to risk his mentor's dissatisfaction and also his projected career as a barber. The senior could, had he felt the boy to be completely unsatisfactory, dismiss him and take back the barber's tools. The barber clothed and fed him and gave him a little spending money regularly during that first year. At special events such as naming ceremonies he was given a small tip by the household head because of his role as the barber's apprentice. This he kept for himself. In 1957 he moved into the compound occupied by his mother in Magumeri. He still considers himself a *tada njima* of the

[3] Like many peoples of West Africa, the wider Islamic world, and even Europe not so long ago, the Kanuri believe that taking out a little blood can rid a person of various ailments. They do this by making a few shallow incisions, then sucking the blood into a cattle horn.

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

barber and still carries out special chores for his former master. He also claims that he gives the senior barber about fifty percent of all his present receipts. As yet he does not know how to cut face marks, remove the uvula, or perform circumcisions, and so he attends all of these ceremonies with the master barber so that he may continue his education. He hopes that by the next year he will be allowed to perform some of these more advanced operations under supervision. When he has completely finished his education, it will not be necessary to do any chores for the senior or give him any commission. Nevertheless the former apprentice should always pay his respects to his ex-master and give him gifts from time to time.

Other apprentices living with strangers claimed they felt more freedom in the household of the stranger and thus live away from home for their training even though they practice the same craft as their father. Many said that they would return home eventually but for the present it was pleasant to travel around seeing other parts of Bornu. This freedom refers more specifically to their sexual activity or at least to its discussion since the discipline and respect given to the compound head is the same as elsewhere. However many boys discussed sex in front of the compound head while such behavior would be impossible in their natal family households. Some boys reported that their father was dead and they had been sent off by their families to the household of relatives or friends in order to learn an occupation.

In summary, adolsecence sharply divides men and women. A young girl takes on her role as a married woman and it is within marriage that she completes her education for adulthood in Kanuri society. A woman may divorce later on as indeed most do, then remarry and bear children throughout. However the framework of adult life is entered into at a first marriage sometime around puberty. For the boy, on the other hand, adolescence is a socially recognized state in life entered at circumcision. This stage of life is used to complete the young man's education and equip him with the interpersonal and occupational skills that are required as an adult and a potential family head.

Maturity

The mature man is described by the Kanuri as *rashidi*. Ideally this implies that he is married, has a compound of his own and an occupation, the use of some land for farming, and a recognized position in the community as the head of a compound. It also means that he has a certain degree of independence so that if he wished he could move of his own accord to another community. To be a mature man par excellence, he should also have children and the reputation of a person who does things discreetly and diplomatically. Maturity is not simply a term applied to a period of life. It is also a value judgement describing a proper and desirable behavior of an adult man. It is not just a role but an evaluation of that role.

Most people seemed unable or unwilling to answer the question of age in relation to maturity, and so they fell back on marriage claiming that any married man was in fact a mature adult. However a few, notably high ranking people, did give an age and suggested that a person could not be thought of as being fully mature until he was at least thirty-five, very often forty. After this age he is not sup-

858 or kila yashu (three heads), the latter referring to the distinctive
302 three pronged hair style of pre-pubertal females. The young girls are soon more fancifully dressed and their eyelids blacked with antimony.

855 Until the age of three or four, children are kept for the
857 most part within the compound, going out only with older members. After four or five, the child begins to explore beyond the compound and meets children of his own sex in the immediate vicinity. These form peer groups who play together and gather together quickly to witness any excitement of the town. They stay away from groups of male elders who may sit conversing under a tree, but otherwise roam the town and later even the surrounding bush area freely as long as their growing amount of household tasks are complete.

868 The girls start to learn the intricacies of preparing food,
[412] carrying water, and the ever present task of grinding millet either on a quern or more commonly in a large wooden mortar. The boys begin to gather firewood, help with the farming, and the family dry season activity, as well as being on hand for running messages. Pressure in the acquisition of these skills is steady and slow but definite. Punishments are rare, but to a Western eye extremely severe. The reason is most often the continual or perhaps sudden relinquishing of a skill which by such time should have already been acquired. A young boy of ten was beaten for omitting to gather grass for his father's horse; this is a skill which boys of seven to nine should have already learned. The severity of the punishment is noted by all children within earshot. Thus the beating of one child in a village or a ward not only punishes his neglect of learned skills but advertises to all, within hearing distance of the child's screams, that punishment is not just a matter of threats but is an awesome, painful reality if limits are transgressed.

• 868 are transgressed.

868 Learning of adult skills is often accomplished through
857 imitative play. A little girl of three and a half was passed a straw plate and, separately, some paper clips. She immediately put the paper clips on the plate as her mother would do in the preparation of food, and began her own approximation of the quick, deft, jiggling movement of sifting the shells of groundnuts. None of the paper-clips was dropped from the plate and she soon passed the plate back saying, "Here are some groundnuts."

857 Sometimes imitative play is more organised. A large group
867 of children between the age of six to ten may organise a "wedding". One of the young boys is the groom and a bride is chosen, as are in-
[864] laws, best man, lead woman, etc. Every detail of the adult virgin marriage ceremony is carried out, even to a mock impregnation, in this case a small doll. The wedding foods, in miniature, are passed around to the proper people, who accept the mock food with a show of seriousness. Adults thought this play was instructive and remarked that it was a good way for the children to learn the customs of the people.

794 Childhood is also the time of basic religious instruction
793 which is more highly stressed for boys. Young boys may be given away any time after the age of six or seven to a Koranic mallam for a year or two, to live and travel with him, work for him, and live in abject poverty, in order to learn Arabic prayers, and some Arabic script. Their relationship to him while under his tutelage is expressed in the Kanuri saying "mallammum abanum kozina" (your mallam exceeds your father). In other words, an individual's Koranic teacher exceeds his father in fatherly qualities, which means he must be given respect, obeyed and sub-